



# BACI E-NEWS

Building Active Communities Initiative

SEPTEMBER 2014

## Fall Update

It is amazing to me how quickly summer goes by in Montana! I hope you all have had the chance to be outside and active in our beautiful state and will continue to enjoy this beautiful time of year. We have a lot to be excited about with the BACI project. To date, twelve communities have attended the BACI Action Institute and are receiving technical assistance and resources from our BACI Advisors and Coaches/Mentors. Each of these communities' leadership teams have developed Action Plans and are making great progress working to accomplish their goals. We have also started meeting with smaller communities, working one-on-one to provide assistance in creating better places for people of all ages and abilities to be active in their communities.

One of these smaller communities is Shelby, Montana. We have worked with the community of Shelby on and off for years and have always admired their commitment to building a healthier and more active community.



Walking School Bus in Shelby, MT

Shelby demonstrated that commitment once again this past January when they adopted a Safe and Accessible Streets policy. This policy states that the "City of Shelby will, to the maximum extent practical, scope, plan, design, construct, operate and maintain appropriate facilities for the safe accommodation of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, emergency responders, freight and users of all ages and abilities in all new construction, retrofit or reconstruction projects.

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## Sidney is working to make it safer to walk and bike (see pg 2)



Ditch...



...becomes Trail!

## 2014 BACI Accomplishments

The Shelby policy goes on to say that “Through ongoing operations and maintenance, the City of Shelby shall identify cost effective opportunities to include Safe and Accessible Streets elements”.

This Safe and Accessible Streets policy is effectively a “complete streets” policy and the intent is to accommodate **all users** while making sure these accommodations are sensitive to the context. This means all streets may not look alike but they do accomplish the goal of safe, convenient and accessible travel for people of all ages and abilities.



Hamilton park and trail along Bitterroot River

Two other communities who have participated in the BACI Action Institute have passed “complete streets” policies this year. The City of Sidney, where development pressures are intense from the Bakken oil boom, decided it was important to ensure that **all users** can travel safely along and across Sidney streets and passed a Safe and Accessible Streets policy this spring. In addition, the City of Hamilton, whose team participated in the Action Institute in March of this year passed a Complete Streets Policy in June. We congratulate these communities and all our BACI participants for the great work they are doing to create healthy and active communities. We look forward to hosting our next group of communities that will participate in the 2015 BACI Action Institute in March of next year.

BACI Whitefish team held a Healthy Communities Workshop in July.

(see page 3 for more details)





## 2014 BACI Accomplishments (continued from page 2)

The BACI Whitefish team with sponsorship from the City of Whitefish, Flathead County Health Department and North Valley Hospital hosted a Healthy Communities Workshop in July and brought Mark Fenton back to the state. Over 100 people participated in the workshop with elected officials, planners, engineers, public health, healthcare, parks and recreation and many more diverse partners represented. Participants from Whitefish, Kalispell, Columbia Falls, West Glacier, Polson, and Salish and Kootenai Tribes were in attendance. Mark shared some great information about what it takes to create a walkable community and then took the group out for a “walk audit” to give the participants on-the-ground experience with this important and effective community engagement tool. After the walk audit we came back and broke into groups for a brainstorming session to help solve specific issues identified by each community.

### Action Shots



Walking Audit in Whitefish



Mark Fenton leading walk audit



Participants forming a “human curb extension” during Whitefish walk audit.



Brainstorming session at Whitefish Healthy Communities Workshop

*Due to a loss of funding, we are sad to announce that as of the end of September, Karen Lane and Ben Brouwer will no longer be part of the BACI staff. They have both been invaluable in designing and staffing this project since its inception and will be greatly missed.*

Stay tuned for our next application for technical assistance through the Building Active Communities Initiative. Also, check out a new opportunity for technical assistance through New Mobility West, a project of the Sonoran Institute, at [newmobilitywest.org](http://newmobilitywest.org).

# Our Team

## **Building Active Community Initiative Staff:**

Cathy Costakis, Senior Consultant—Built Environment, Montana State University, Office of Rural Health  
Melinda Barnes, Executive Director, Bike Walk Montana

## **Building Active Community Initiative Advisors:**

Joe Gilpin, Principal, Alta Planning + Design  
Jerry Grebenc, Project Manager, Future West  
Hillary Hanson, Deputy Health Officer, Flathead City-County Health Department  
Paul Lachapelle, Associate Professor and Community Development Extension Specialist, Montana State University  
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Allison Mouch, Community Planning Bureau Chief, Montana Department of Commerce  
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## **Get in touch:**

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The Building Active Communities Initiative (BACI) is a project of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services' Nutrition and Physical Activity Program (NAPA) in partnership with Montana State University's Office of Rural Health, the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department, and Bike Walk Montana.

The BACI project is supported by a Community Transformation Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The goal of BACI is to create or enhance community environments so that people of all ages, abilities and income levels can safely walk, bike or take public transportation to places they need to go.



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